

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

YELLOWSTONE NATIONAL PARK

YELLOWSTONE PARK, WYO.

OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

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MONTHLY REPORT

for

April, 1918

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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ICE OF ~~SUPERVISOR~~
Superintendent.

May 9, 1918.

The Director,
National Park Service,
Washington, D. C.

Sir:

I have the honor to submit my report of conditions in the park for the month of April, 1918:

GENERAL STATEMENT.

The Yellowstone National Park was set aside by Act of Congress March 1, 1872, (Secs. 2474 and 2475, R. S., 17 Stat., 32) as a pleasuring-ground for the benefit and enjoyment of the people, and placed under the exclusive control of the Secretary of the Interior, who was authorized to make such rules and regulations as he deems necessary for the care and management of the park. It is situated principally in northwestern Wyoming, but laps over a little more than two miles into Montana on the north, and almost two miles into Montana and Idaho on the west. Its dimensions are about 62 miles north and south, and about 54 miles east and west, giving an area of about 3,546 square miles, or 2,142,720 acres. Its altitude is 6,000 to 11,000 feet.

The park was governed by civilian superintendents, assisted by a few scouts, from the time it was set aside until August 10, 1886, when, under authority contained in the Sundry Civil Bill, approved March 3, 1883, at the request of the Secretary of the Interior, the Secretary of War detailed troops of United States Cavalry to protect the park, the commanding officer acting as park superintendent under the direct orders of the Secretary of the Interior. On October 16, 1916, by mutual agreement of the heads of the two Departments, the troops were withdrawn from the park and a civilian superintendent, with a corps of 25 rangers for patrol and protection work, and a few civilian employees necessary for other duties, were appointed by the Secretary

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of the Interior to replace them. The Sundry Civil Bill, approved June 12, 1917, (Public No. 21, 65th Congress) contained a clause which made it necessary for the troops to be returned to the park for the purpose of patrolling it, and they were returned on June 26, 1917, relieving the park superintendent of so much of the duties as pertained to "protection."

The maintenance and construction of roads, bridges and improvements in Yellowstone Park, is carried on by special appropriation under the War Department, the work being locally in charge of an officer of the U. S. Engineer Department, known as the District Engineer Officer, who reports directly to the Chief of Engineers, although his orders direct him to report to the Park Superintendent for duty. 278.8 miles of main road and 24.75 miles of secondary road are located in the park, and 106.5 miles of main road are maintained by the same department in the forest reserves adjoining the park on the south and east. Major George E. Verrill, Engineers, U. S. Reserves, is at the present time in charge of improvement work in the park, as District Engineer. A copy of his report for the month of April is appended hereto. *May for a c e*

The local office of the U. S. Weather Bureau, Department of Agriculture, is in charge of Mr. G. E. Lawton, Observer.

Park Headquarters for all departments and most of the concessioners, is located at Mammoth Hot Springs. A telephone system connects Headquarters with the sub-stations. A hydro-electric power plant furnishes the light for the buildings and grounds at Headquarters. Water, electric current, and telephone service are furnished other departments of the government in the park, by the National Park Service, without charge. During April the hydro-electric power plant was run daily from 4.00 P. M. until 8.00 A. M., and was continued during the day when any necessity existed.

Funds for purposes of administration of the park, and for the care and maintenance of buffalo and other animals, are obtained from special appropriations by Congress, and from revenues derived from various sources in the park.

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CONDITIONS FOR THE MONTH OF APRIL.

The temperature during April was 4.1 below normal. The lowest temperature recorded during the month was 8 degrees above Zero, on the 2d. 13.6 inches of snow fell, being 5.6 inches greater than normal. Reduced to water, the total precipitation for the month was 1.69 inches, or .21 inches more than normal for April. The snow that fell was well distributed and mostly melted as fast as it came, so there was none remaining on the ground at Mammoth Hot Springs at the end of the month, except in drifts on the north side of the hills. Generally speaking, the weather was raw, giving the impression of a backward spring. But the snow at various park stations was less than usual at the end of April, as it was not specially heavy during the winter, and melted considerably in March, and the prospects for opening most of the roads from snow before the end of May seem excellent. Some of the employees of the Yellowstone Park Transportation Company shoveled out the big drift in Golden Gate so a motor car was able to go through the Gate on May 1st. Notwithstanding the cold, raw weather that prevailed during the month, many of the days were warm enough so that the grass got a good start, and the wild animals found an abundance of forage on the lower slopes of the hills and mountains.

EMPLOYEES.

A total of 22 permanent and 2 temporary regular employees were carried on the pay roll during the month of April, namely: one chief clerk (Acting Superintendent), two clerks, one chief scout, one scout, one buffalo keeper, one assistant buffalo keeper, two telephone switchboard operators, one lineman, one electrician, one assistant electrician, one laborer, one temporary plumber, (1st to 10th) one plumber, (11th to 30th) one temporary assistant electrician.

(One clerk was carried from the 1st to the 22d; one scout from the 1st to the 15th; one plumber from the 1st to the 10th; one plumber from the 11th to the 30th.)

In addition to the above, towards the end of the month a crew of one foreman, 2 packers, and 7 laborers was organized to begin the work of constructing a firelane between Gardiner, Montana, up the north bank of the Yellowstone River to Slough Creek. Pack transportation was hired to keep this crew and another supplied and move the camp. Crew was engaged by cutting out that part of the N. body line of the park from Gardiner & and marking the line in the area.

One man was employed as an irrigator by the day at the buffalo farm, repairing ditches and assisting with the general farm work.

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Distribution - regular employees: Chief Scout Mc Bride patrolled in the vicinity of Headquarters and along the Yellowstone River, in the interests of the wild animals, and went over the lower part of the route of the proposed firelane with the foreman, preliminary to making a permanent location. He was assisted in patrolling by Scouts Smith and Lawson, and they also put in several days policing the grounds in the vicinity of the buildings used as stables and store rooms, which were left in bad condition by the troops of the 7th Cavalry, last fall. Considerable assistance was also given to the military force in policing the grounds about the post. Scout Pound was engaged practically the whole month in the blacksmith shop, repairing and overhauling motor transportation, wagons and tools. Up to the time when he felt obliged to ask for a layoff (April 15th), so as to care for his ranch and do the seeding, Scout Anderson patrolled along the north line of the park east from Gardiner, and assisted the forest rangers in that vicinity in watching for poachers. Scout Dewing patrolled from Gardiner, west, along the line, during the early part of the month, and later in the vicinity of Soda Butte and the Buffalo Farm, making a specialty of hunting for wolves and coyotes. Scout Lacombe remained on duty at Tower Falls Station, and patrolled that region constantly. Scout Little returned on April 7th from a long snowshoe trip to Pelican Creek and Lamar River, patrolled within a radius of ten miles from Headquarters April 8th to 19th, and on the 20th left for another trip to Upper Lamar River via Tower Falls and Soda Butte. Scout Brooks, who left for a long patrol to the southern part of the park on March 25th, is still patrolling that region, and has covered the territory in the vicinity of Snake River and Bechler Stations thoroughly.

Chief Scout Mc Bride and Scouts Dewing, Smith and Lawson also assisted Mr. F. M. Dille, a representative of the U. S. Biological Survey, in capturing six blacktail deer in the vicinity of Mammoth Hot Springs, which he shipped to the Montana Bison Range on April 5th, under authority of March 14th.

The buffalo keeper and his assistant were on duty at the buffalo farm on Lamar River, caring for the buffalo, which are beginning to calve, and preparing for regular spring work of seeding, repairing fences, and irrigating ditches,

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etc. Since April 19th an irrigator has been employed there getting the fields and ditches in shape for proper irrigating, and assisting in general policing and ranch work. Other employees were on duty at Headquarters, maintaining and operating telephone lines, water system and power plant, buildings, etc., and caring for domestic animals in use, and those being wintered on hay.

Leaves of absence: Following leaves of absence were granted during the month of April:

Chester A. Lindsley, chief clerk, 1st to 2d (noon); 1½ days.

Charles J. Smith, scout, 19th (noon) to 21st, and from 25th to 28th; 4½ days.

Roy T. Frazier, assistant buffalo keeper, 2d to 7th (noon) and 26th to 28th; 7 days.

C. A. Mc Kinley Mason, telephone switchboard operator, extension annual leave account sickness, 19th to 23d; 5 days.

E. A. Allan, lineman, 16th (noon) to 18th (noon); 2 days.

Henry O. D'Ewart, laborer, 27th to 30th (noon); 2½ days.

Appointment: H. N. Jones was appointed plumber, effective April 11th, per Department's authority March 22, 1918, at a salary of \$1200 per annum.

Resignations: Henry Anderson, scout, \$1200 per annum, resigned effective at the close of April 15th.

George T. Dustman, clerk, furloughed at the close of April 22d, account being drafted into the service of the United States at his own request.

Vacancies: At the close of April 30th there were the following vacancies: (1) assistant electrician at \$1200 per annum; 1 lineman at \$900.00 per annum; and 1 clerk at \$1200 per annum.

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During the month employees of this office purchased War Savings Stamps to the value of \$128.65, and Third Liberty Loan Bonds to the value of \$6,650.00. Liberal subscriptions were also made to Red Cross maintenance.

A combined picture show and dance was held in the Post Exchange on April 13th, generally participated in by all residents of the Park and Gardiner, which netted a sum of approximately \$200.00, which was donated to the American Red Cross, through the Yellowstone Park Branch of the Park County (Montana) Chapter.

ANIMALS. DOMESTIC.

Such driving, saddle and pack animals as were needed for regular work and feeding game, were kept up and fed hay and grain. Surplus horses were kept on alfalfa hay at Headquarters.

Preparations are being made to turn out all surplus stock to graze as soon as practicable to do so.

GRAZING IN THE PARK.

The snow has melted away from much of the best grazing grounds along the north line of the park, and the grazing for wild animals was excellent during the greater part of the month. No domestic animals were grazed in the park during the month, except a few government animals, occasionally, in the immediate vicinity of the stations that are occupied.

FIRES.

No forest fires occurred. So far as I know, no steps have been taken to replace the Gallatin Soldier Station which was destroyed by fire on March 10th.

FISH.

At times the fishing was excellent in the Gardiner River below the mouth of Boiling River, and was enjoyed by a few local residents.

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IMPROVEMENTS.

✓ The Yellowstone Park Transportation Company continued in service a few mechanics overhauling the motor cars preparatory to the opening of the park season, and also began work of improving one of the old buildings at Mammoth formerly used as a storage building for grain, for use of workmen as a mess house at times when the hotels are not running.

✓ The Yellowstone Park Hotel Company began work of improving and cultivating its garden tract on Gardiner River. Two Chinamen were engaged on this work during the entire month of April.

✓ The U. S. Engineer Department worked a crew all the month on the old road between Mammoth Hot Springs and Gardiner, getting it ready for use as an emergency road in case the "Gardiner Slide" completely closes the regular road, and also did some slight repairs in the way of draining and smoothing the roads in the vicinity of Mammoth Hot Springs.

✓ Material was purchased for repairing the roof to the annex to the Power Plant, painting the concrete floor in the plant, and painting the pipe line leading from the reservoir to the plant. Most of this work can probably be done by the regular employees.

✓ Arrangements are in progress for continuing the telephone line construction work between Mammoth and the Buffalo Farm, which was in progress when winter set in, and poles are now being out for the purpose. Arrangements are also in progress for procuring labor and seed for continuing the seeding of meadows to supply hay for animals in the park.

MONIES TRANSMITTED.

✓ Report of monies collected, transmitted, due, etc., made on the blank forms provided for the purpose, are inclosed herewith as a part of this report.

NATURAL PHENOMENA.

✓ At Mammoth Hot Springs it is noted that "Hymen Terrace", located just above the U. S. Commissioner's residence,

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usually a very beautiful terrace, is nearly dry. The overflow from the Main Springs, which for the past year has been flowing over mostly on the north side of the terrace, seems to be working back to its old location, over Jupiter Terrace, close to the road opposite the reservoir.

VISITORS.

Only one visitor came in at the northern entrance for a trip to Mammoth and vicinity. Two men, residents of Yellowstone, Montana, came through to the northern entrance looking for work, with special permission with a dog team and sledge, about the end of April.

Special visitors were recorded as follows:

Mr. E. H. Moorman, an official of the Yellowstone Park Camping Company, visited Mammoth Hot Springs on the company's business, on April 20th.

Lieut. Colonel J. F. Kreps, U. S. Army, Inspector General of the Western Department, with his field clerk, visited Fort Yellowstone on an official tour of inspection on April 27th, and made a second trip May 1st to 5th.

WILD ANIMALS.

With the exception of the northwest corner where the wild animals are now mostly outside of the park, patrols were made covering most of the territory frequented by elk, deer, antelope, and mountain sheep, and all reports indicate that these animals wintered in excellent shape, considerably better than normal. A few of the young animals have been found dead, mostly some that were naturally weak and died from exposure to the cold, wet storms of the spring months, or killed by wolves, lions or coyotes. While no definite count has been made, I can see no reason from the reports turned in to me, why there should not have been an increase of from 20 to 40% among these animals during the past year.

Elk: There are still about 1,500 elk outside of the park, down the valley of the Yellowstone River, as nearly as I can determine from reports of the forest rangers stationed there. Scout Dewing reports about 7,000 seen on his patrols up Yellowstone River from Gardiner to Soda Butte; and finding

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7 killed by wolves. Steve Elkins, who was hunting lions, and Donald Stevenson, Predatory Animal Hunter for the U. S. Biological Survey, who has been in the park since April 23d, traveling together, reported about 2,500 elk between Hell-roaring and Slough Creeks, and the finding of the carcasses of six that had been killed by wolves. Scout Lacombe reports slightly over 4,000 elk in his district at Tower Falls. These are the largest numbers reported, but cover only a portion of the country frequented by elk.

✓ One bull elk was shipped, crated, to Mexico, Missouri, on April 16th, by authority of April 11, 1918, to replace one that was shipped early in the winter and died soon after its arrival.

✓ Buffalo: The tame buffalo are in excellent condition, and grass has started to such an extent that it is not necessary to feed them hay. Six calves have been born in the herd to date. Samples of the stomach contents of an aborted calf were forwarded to the Bureau of Animal Industry, Washington, D. C., for examination, on April 9th.

✓ Scout Little returned to Lamar River April 20th to 30th, and saw twelve wild buffalo on his trip. He reports that they wintered well.

✓ Deer: Scout Dewing saw about 200 deer during the month. One blacktail fawn was killed by accident near the kitchen of the post hospital on April 14th.

✓ Six blacktail deer, consisting of 3 adult females, 1 female and 2 male fawns, were captured by Mr. F. M. Dille, representing the U. S. Biological Survey, with assistance of our scouts, and shipped on April 15th to the Montana Bison Range, under your authority of March 14, 1918.

✓ Mountain Sheep: About 70 mountain sheep were seen during the month, and their condition was excellent. While inspecting the Gardiner Slide conditions with Mr. Reaburn on May 7th, we saw a flock of 14 fine rams on Mount Everts.

✓ Coyotes: Nineteen coyotes were killed during the month.

✓ Wolves: Nineteen wolves were killed during the month, 16 of them by Mr. Steve Elkins, 2 by Scout Dewing, and 1 by

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Mr. Donald Stevenson, a predatory animal hunter representing the Biological Survey. There are indications of many more wolves on Specimen Ridge and Hellroaring, and Stevenson and Dewing are still hunting them.

✓ Mountain Lions: Elkins reported killing five mountain lions, making 22 in all that have been killed in the park during the past winter.

PROTECTION AND CARE OF GAME.

✓ No cases of poaching in the park, or in the forest reserve adjoining, were reported during the month.

ARRESTS AND VIOLATIONS OF THE LAW.

✓ No violations of the law were reported, and no arrests were made, during the month. Typewritten copies of the latest park regulations were received, and were distributed to park employees and to the Commanding Officer of troops, by circular letter of transmittal dated April 16th, copy herewith. Steps were also taken to discourage the introduction of intoxicants into the park, by any one, for any purpose.

PROPOSED WORK.

✓ Completion of the locational and pictorial index of structures and improvements in the park, as suggested in your letter of June 15, 1917. Some progress was made on this work early in the month of April, but since Clerk Dustman left and his place has not as yet been filled, our office work, which has not been caught up to date for at least a year, is still further behind. Steps have been taken to fill the vacancy at the earliest practicable date.

✓ Special care of wild and domestic animals, and destruction of carnivorous animals. Arrangements are being made to turn out all surplus horses not needed for immediate work, as soon as grazing is adequate for them.

✓ Repair and maintenance of telephone lines, and continuation of the construction of a new line between Mammoth and Soda Butte. Men are already engaged in getting out the poles for this line.

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✓ Repair and maintenance of water system, and hydro-electric power plant. Material is on hand for painting the concrete floor in the power plant, for repairing the roof to the annex, and for painting the pipe line between the reservoir and the power plant, and this work will be done as soon as the weather conditions will permit.

✓ Continuation of constructing firelanes. A crew is already in the field constructing a firelane north of the Yellowstone River between Gardiner and Slough Creek.

✓ Cutting out and marking portions of the north, west and east boundary lines of the park. One crew has already been put in the field working east on the north line from Gardiner, and additional crews will be put on if it is practicable to get the men when the weather conditions are suitable.

✓ Cultivation of land for raising hay for wild animals. The work of taking up and cultivating the alfalfa field at Gardiner is already in progress, and arrangements are being made to continue the work begun last summer on Lamar River near the Buffalo Farm.

✓ Purchase and installation of signs. Bids for material for making wooden signs, and for posts for them have been solicited from here to the Pacific Coast, and thus far no satisfactory bids have been received. The question of making these signs looks very discouraging, and it may be necessary to give the matter up entirely, or let a contract for metal signs.

✓ Plans are on foot for construction of suitable gateways to mark the entrances of the park, but no work in this line has been accomplished.

✓ Considerable time has been spent in looking over the ground and reporting of the various proposed locations of a road between Mammoth Hot Springs and Gardiner to eliminate the "Gardiner Slide."

Very respectfully,

CHESTER A. LINDSLEY

Acting Superintendent.

Inclosures: